



St. Louis Secondary School Carrickmacross

Attendance Strategy

2017



Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	St Louis Secondary School, Carrickmacross
Address	Convent Hill, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan A81HF77
Roll Number	64760J
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>At St. Louis Secondary School we are committed to encouraging our students to develop a pattern of regular and punctual attendance in order to benefit fully from the education provided. Without such a pattern of regular attendance, it is not possible to</p> <p><i>“foster a school community where all the members live in a friendly environment, where young people are taught to think for themselves, to be responsible for their actions, to hold in respect the world in which they live, and to recognise the importance of spiritual values in their lives” (Ref: School Mission Statement).</i></p>

<p>The school's high expectations around attendance</p>	<p>At present there are many strategies in place within the school, which are aimed at encouraging positive attendance coupled with high expectations. Good attendance is promoted in the school by a culture of high expectations, encouraging each student to take responsibility for his or her own learning and achieve full potential through regular presence in class.</p>
<p>How attendance will be monitored</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The attendance will be recorded into e-Portal at the end of the first period in the morning and again after lunch, by the relevant class teacher. Those arriving after the start of class are recorded as late. • Students who arrive at school after the first period are required to sign in at the School Reception. • Students who leave the school during the day due to illness or appointments must be collected by a parent/guardian at School Reception and must then sign out. • Where students are absent from school for school-related extra-curricular activities, this is entered in e-portal by the relevant teacher as <i>school activity</i>. The teacher who oversees the activity prepares a list of the names and, prior to departure, posts this on the Staff Notice Board or on the e-portal notice-board and provides a copy

	<p>of the list to Reception. If a student listed is absent from the trip, the teacher will notify the school office of same.</p>
<p>Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target setting and targets • The whole-school approach • Promoting good attendance • Responding to poor attendance 	<p>Targets Please see attached Appendix 'Attendance target Plan'</p> <p>The Whole-School Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Year Head and/or member(s) of the Care Team meet with students for whom attendance or punctuality has been identified as an issue. • School term reports to Parents/Guardians include a breakdown of attendance for the period in question. • We operate a book rental scheme. • We offer the Leaving Certificate Applied and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programmes at senior cycle. • Our first year induction programme allows students to make a successful transition to secondary school. This is further supported by the work of our Peer Ministers. • Parents receive a text message if their daughter is absent. • We offer afterschool supervised study for exam classes. • Learning support which addresses individual student needs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school also recognises the importance of the student voice within the school. Students are encouraged to participate in the many leadership opportunities available to them e.g. School Prefect, Student Council. <p><i>Promoting Good Attendance</i></p> <p>Positive relations are fostered between staff and students which has created a culture of mutual respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning throughout the curriculum and the implications for them of irregular attendance.• Teachers employ differentiated teaching strategies in their lessons to ensure all students can access the curriculum at their own level. <p><i>Responding to Poor Attendance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The deputy Principal will provide a report on student absenteeism to the year-heads every fortnight at year head meetings. The year heads then follow up with students and parents where necessary.• The school recognises the importance of early intervention in dealing with students who are developing poor attendance patterns. Parents receive an attendance alert card if their daughter has missed more than 10 schools days and each
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	<p>subsequent 5 days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year heads will liaise with parents/guardians to address any ongoing concerns they may have around attendance and work together to resolve the issue. • The principal and deputy principal will liaise with the Educational Welfare Officer when necessary.
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<p>Patron (Le Cheile) The Board of Management is accountable to the patron and must keep them informed of its decisions and proposals (Section 15(d) of Education (Welfare) Act 2000). In order to comply with its responsibilities, the Board submits its Statement of Strategy to the patron.</p> <p>Board of Management The Board of Management has the overall responsibility for the preparation of the school’s Statement of Strategy and ensures that the statutory obligations of the school with regard to school attendance and participation are adhered to. The Board also ensures that all information is collected and issued in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of the process, strategy and policy regarding attendance.</p> <p>Principal It is the responsibility of the principal, under the direction</p>

	<p>of the Board of Management, to lead and guide the work on the Statement of Strategy. The Principal is also responsible for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To monitor attendance records regularly.• To make reports to the Education Welfare Officer as required by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.• To inform parents/guardians and students of procedures for the notification of absences/ withdrawal of students from the school.• To remind students and parents/guardians of the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of frequent absences on student progress.• To work in conjunction with the deputy principal in submitting the four reports to Tusla - (Child and Family Agency).• To inform new teachers of their obligations with regard to recording attendance. <p>Year Head</p> <p>Their responsibility is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To monitor regularly the attendance records on the e-Portal system for the given year.• To liaise with the Pastoral Care Team to address the difficulties surrounding a particular pupil's attendance.• To meet those students for whom attendance or
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	<p>punctuality is a problem in order to discuss the issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To contact parents/guardians where unauthorised absences occur or are suspected and/ or when patterns of absences are developing and to notify the deputy principal of same.• To remind the pupils during the assemblies of the Year Group of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. <p>Teacher</p> <p>The teachers acknowledge their responsibility to monitor attendance on a daily basis.</p> <p>Their responsibility is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To alert the class teacher or year head if there is a pattern of absenteeism in their class.• To impress on students the importance of regular attendance and insist on punctuality and to record the attendance of every class every day. When substituting under the S&S scheme or when providing cover for personal leave, the covering teacher must also take a roll (essential information in the event of an evacuation of the school.)• To input the attendance for the first and seventh
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	<p>periods into the e-Portal system before 9.40am and 2.35pm. If there is a technical difficulty the class teacher will record the attendance manually on paper and submit to the school reception. If the class teacher is substituting during these periods the attendance should be recorded either electronically on e-Portal or on the class list available for that time and then submitted to the school reception.</p> <p>Administrative Staff</p> <p>Their responsibility is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To administer the signing in and out of students. (Hard copy).• Cross check names of students absent in the afternoon with that in the sign-out book to ensure everyone is accounted for. <p>Parents/Guardians</p> <p>Their responsibility is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have primary responsibility to ensure children attend school.• Have the responsibility to inform the school of absences and give reasons for this by providing a note in the student journal.• Present at the school reception to sign their daughter out in the event that they need to leave the school during school hours.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with the relevant year-heads/school management when necessary to resolve issues around attendance and to prevent future absences. <p>Students</p> <p>The school recognises the fact that empowering students to have a say in their school and in their community can improve students’ engagement with school life, with follow-on benefits for school attendance. All students are encouraged to engage with leadership opportunities in the school and within the local community. These can involve participation in decision-making opportunities, leading group activities and progressing to roles of more responsibility (e.g. student council, peer ministry, prefects, Comhairle na nÓg and youth organisations).</p> <p>Students have responsibility for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring they attend school every day and on time. • Signing in at reception if they arrive after the first period. • Provide a note to the office after an absence.
Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will collaborate with primary schools to support student attendance in the transition from primary to post-primary school;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals' networks working on joint approaches to raising awareness about the importance of attendance, promoting attendance and sharing practice experience; ☒ • The school will collaborate with school transport around transport in rural areas; ☒ • Engage in joint school holiday planning to support attendance from families with children attending different local schools.
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance records will be reviewed in order to compile data to assess the success or otherwise of the strategy. • Year Heads, Class Teachers and School Management will monitor attendance records on a monthly basis to ensure intervention is possible at the earliest opportunity.
Review process and date for review	The statement will be reviewed every two years. Student Council, Parents' Association, Staff and the Board of Management will all be involved in the review.
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	11 th December 2017
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	12 th December 2017

No	Priorities	Action Plan	Personnel	17/ 18	18/ 19	19/ 20	20/ 21	21/ 22	Progress
1.	Obtain minimum 90% attendance in all second level classes	<p>Create an awareness campaign using posters and slogans</p> <p>Monitor 'signouts' each month</p> <p>Display graphs on attendance for each year group on noticeboard in each yearblock at the end of each Term</p> <p>Year Heads send out attendance alert cards</p> <p>Maintain e-portal All staff members to promote good attendance habits</p>	Principal Deputy Principal Year Heads	√	√	√	√	√	

2.	Reward improved, very good and unbroken attendance	Include attendance awards at Junior and Senior cycle award ceremonies			√	√	√	√	
3.	Create awareness among parents on benefits of good attendance	<p>At Induction evening explain to parents the school's policy re. explaining absences</p> <p>Change code of behavior to reflect the policy of parent/guardian signing student out of school</p> <p>Send letter to parents of exam years to encourage students to attend school in weeks leading up to state exams</p> <p>Letter to parents at start of year emphasizing the need for appointments on Wednesday</p>	Parent/guardian Deputy Principal		√	√	√	√	

		afternoon, attendance important for references and the impact part-time work can have on students ability to concentrate							
4.	Target students and classes with low attendance patterns	5 week attendance drive targeted at individuals with the worst attendance Have regular meetings with year heads to monitor attendance	Class Tutors EWO Year heads L Support Deputy Principal Parents/guardians Principal	√	√	√	√	√	